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STAFF NOTES:

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Libya

Qadhafi Reportedly Asked to Leave Office

25X1C [REDACTED] a group of
Libyan officers has asked President Qadhafi to step
25X1C down from office. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Qadhafi intended
to meet with the group to defend his position.

25X1C The group reportedly consists of 41 officers
including five members of the ruling Revolutionary
Command Council; all of the officers were [REDACTED] 25X1C
[REDACTED] members of the Free Officers group.
The Free Officers Movement is an organization of some
70 men who participated in the 1969 coup and since
then have served as a consultative body to Qadhafi
and the command council. Qadhafi relies heavily on
the organization, which is a privileged phalanx in
the military and, thus, a major prop of the regime.

We doubt that the officers--especially the council
members--would challenge Qadhafi so directly, but they
may have confronted him over the recklessness of his
recent actions. During the past year, some members
of the regime have privately questioned the wisdom of
Qadhafi's open antagonism and brash challenges to
Cairo and his dramatic swing toward Moscow. Above
all, many are angry about Qadhafi's free-wheeling
approach to foreign policy and his refusal to share
major decision-making with them.

The rapid deterioration in relations with Cairo
over the last several months--brought on almost exclu-
sively by Qadhafi himself--has unnerved many Libyans,
who have well-founded fears of Egyptian retaliation.
An explosion in Tripoli several weeks ago that appar-
ently was an act of sabotage has heightened these
concerns and may have prompted Qadhafi's colleagues
to voice their grievances more forcefully. (SECRET
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25X1A [REDACTED]
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Ethiopia-Sudan

Cool Relations

Relations between Ethiopia and Sudan have reached their lowest ebb in many months. Recent Ethiopian actions could, if they continue, push Sudan toward greater cooperation with the Eritrean rebels; Khartoum at present is attempting to prevent relations from deteriorating further.

Both sides are partly responsible for the current situation. The Sudanese disapprove of some of the actions taken by Ethiopia's military rulers, especially their killing of political prisoners last November and their treatment of Haile Selassie. President Numayri is also unhappy with Ethiopia's refusal to accept his proposal for an immediate cease-fire and direct talks with the rebels. The military council in Addis Ababa, for its part, believes Numayri is aiding the rebels, and has criticized him for giving too much publicity to his mediation efforts.

Relations took a sharp turn for the worse in late June when the Ethiopian press published articles claiming that 6,000 refugees from southern Sudan had crossed into Ethiopia during the preceding two months. The council apparently sponsored the articles as a means of balancing the publicity given the influx of large numbers of Eritrean refugees into Sudan. The council is also attempting to remind Khartoum that the Sudanese refugees are a potential dissident force that could be aided by Ethiopia, in retaliation for Sudan's alleged support for the Eritreans. This week Ethiopia re-emphasized its displeasure with the Numayri regime by failing to send a delegation to Khartoum for long-scheduled border talks.

Numayri, who still hopes his mediation effort will eventually make progress, has reacted calmly to Addis Ababa's actions. A carefully worded statement

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appeared in the Sudanese press on July 6 denying the reports appearing in a "friendly state" about Sudanese refugees. Numayri could lose his patience, however, if the Ethiopians persist in their propaganda and their intransigence on the Eritrean issue. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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